We Claim:

1. A method of hydrolyzing a protein comprising the steps of:
   (a) hydrolyzing a quantity of mucosa tissue comprising protein with a proteolytic enzyme so as to yield a first hydrolyzed product including heparin and peptone; and
   (b) contacting said first hydrolyzed product with a protein-containing material under conditions for hydrolyzing at least some of the protein in said material so as to yield a second hydrolyzed product.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said proteolytic enzyme has an enzymatic activity and said first hydrolyzed product retains at least about 30% of said proteolytic enzyme activity.

3. The method of claim 1, further including the step of extracting at least some of said heparin from said first hydrolyzed product prior to said contacting step (b).

4. The method of claim 1, further including the step of preserving said mucosa tissue prior to said hydrolyzing step (a) by contacting said mucosa tissue with a preserving agent selected from the group consisting of hydrogen peroxide and phosphoric acid.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein said preserving agent is phosphoric acid, and said preserving step comprises adjusting the pH of the mucosa tissue with phosphoric acid to about 2-4.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and said preserving step comprises mixing less than about 1% by weight hydrogen peroxide with said mucosa tissue, said percent by weight hydrogen peroxide being based upon the total weight of the mucosa tissue taken as 100% by weight.

7. The method of claim 6, further including the step of heating said mucosa tissue to a temperature of from about 50-105 °C prior to said preserving step.

8. The method of claim 4, wherein said preserved mucosa tissue has a standard plate count of less than about 20,000 cfu/g about seven days after said preserving step.

9. The method of claim 4, wherein said preserved mucosa tissue has an *E. Coli* count of less than about 10 cfu/g about seven days after said preserving step.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein during said hydrolyzing step (a) said proteolytic enzyme is added at a rate of at least about 10 g of enzyme per kg of protein present in said mucosa tissue.

11. The method of claim 4, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and said preserved mucosa tissue has an ash content of less than about 10% by weight, based upon the total weight of the preserved mucosa tissue taken as 100% by weight.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said protein-containing material is derived from a source selected from the group consisting of animal liver, animal viscera, wheat, soybeans, products comprising blood, whey products, animal offal, meat isolates, and mixtures thereof.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity of said first hydrolyzed product contacted with said protein-containing material is less than about 50% by weight on a solids basis, based upon the total solids weight of both the protein-containing material and first hydrolyzed product taken as 100% by weight.

14. A method of hydrolyzing a protein comprising the steps of:
providing a quantity of an acidic dispersion comprising peptone;
adjusting the pH of said dispersion to at least about 6.5; and
contacting said pH-adjusted dispersion with a protein-containing material under conditions for hydrolyzing at least some of the protein in said material so as to yield a hydrolyzed product.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein said protein-containing material is derived from a source selected from the group consisting of animal liver, soybeans, products comprising blood, whey products, animal offal, meat isolates, and mixtures thereof.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the quantity of said pH-adjusted dispersion contacted with said protein-containing material is less than about 50% by weight on a solids basis, based upon the total solids weight of both the pH-adjusted dispersion and said protein-containing material taken as 100% by weight.

17. A method of hydrolyzing a protein comprising the steps of:

providing a quantity of a protein;

adding a proteolytic enzyme to said protein at a rate of at least about 10 g of enzyme per kg of protein so as to yield a first hydrolyzed product; and

contacting said first hydrolyzed product with a protein-containing material under conditions for hydrolyzing at least some of the protein in said material so as to yield a second hydrolyzed product.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein said protein-containing material is derived from a source selected from the group consisting of animal liver, soybeans, products comprising blood, whey products, animal offal, meat isolates, and mixtures thereof.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the quantity of said first hydrolyzed product contacted with said protein-containing material is less than about 50% by weight on a solids basis, based upon the total solids weight of both the protein-containing material and first hydrolyzed product taken as 100% by weight.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein said proteolytic enzyme has an enzymatic activity and said first hydrolyzed product retains at least about 30% of said proteolytic enzyme activity.

21. A method for preserving mucosa tissue comprising mixing a quantity of mucosa tissue with a preserving agent selected from the group consisting of hydrogen peroxide and phosphoric acid to yield the preserved mucosa tissue.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is phosphoric acid, and said mixing step comprises adjusting the pH of the mucosa tissue with phosphoric acid to about 2-4.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and said mixing step comprises mixing less than about 1% by weight of hydrogen peroxide with said mucosa tissue, said percent by weight hydrogen peroxide being based upon the weight of the mucosa tissue taken as 100% by weight.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and further including the step of heating said mucosa tissue to a temperature of from about 50-105°C prior to said mixing step.

25. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide, and said preserved mucosa tissue has an ash content of less than about 10% by weight, based upon the total weight of the preserved mucosa tissue as 100% by weight.

26. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserved mucosa tissue has a standard plate count of less than about 20,000 cfu/g about seven days after said preserving step.

27. The method of claim 21, wherein said preserved mucosa tissue has an *E. Coli* count of less than about 10 cfu/g about seven days after said preserving step.

28. A preserved mucosa tissue product formed by contacting a quantity of mucosa tissue with a preserving agent selected from the group consisting of hydrogen peroxide and phosphoric acid.

29. The product of claim 28, wherein said preserving agent is hydrogen peroxide and the quantity of hydrogen peroxide in said preserved mucosa tissue is less than about 0.04% by weight, based upon the total weight of the preserved mucosa tissue taken as 100% by weight.

30. The product of claim 28, wherein said preserving agent is phosphoric acid and the pH of the preserved mucosa tissue is from about 2-4.

31. The product of claim 28, wherein about seven days after said mucosa tissue is contacted with said preserving agent said preserved mucosa tissue has a standard plate count of less than about 20,000 cfu/g.

32. The product of claim 28, wherein about seven days after said mucosa tissue is contacted with said preserving agent said preserved mucosa tissue has an *E. Coli* count of less than about 10 cfu/g.

33. A product in accordance with claim 1.

34. A product in accordance with claim 14.

35. A product in accordance with claim 17.

Add a'